A U M

Every human being has the germ of all the powers attributed to great initiates.
—WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

# THEOSOPHY

Vol. XLI March, 1953 No. 5

## THE SUBTLETY OF PHILOSOPHY

PHILOSOPHY, by its very nature and definition, can never lend itself to categorical assertion. For philosophy is a proposal that truth is not to be found in categories, but rather discoverable only by inspiration or *self*-revelation. A philosophy may recommend various methods for employment in the pursuit of truth, and may support these recommendations by calling attention to the values which other thinkers have claimed from travelling certain avenues of thought. A philosophy may also assert, with strong conviction, that certain basic principles underlie those viewpoints which have brought the greatest inspiration and mutual understanding among men, and that these principles, in the form of a comprehensive system of thought, constitute a point of departure for individual truth-quests of far greater value than any supplied by "revealed" religion. And because philosophy is defined as *love* of wisdom and because love is a subtle thing, a devotee of philosophy will not condone the handling of truth in a callow or callous manner. Thus the war between the philosophers and the religionists.

Each one of H. P. Blavatsky's introductions of theosophical philosophy to the general public establishes these points. While a large amount of her writing is involved with the presentation of specific doctrines representing a Wisdom Religion, even more important than any of these doctrines, it seems, was the encouragement of the philosophic attitude and method by which these doctrines could be fruitfully considered. The reason for this should not be difficult to determine: A doctrine, any doctrine, can become a stopping-place of mind. What-

ever the dynamic of the idea of karma, however marvelous the perspective occasioned by dwelling upon the idea of reincarnation—if these concepts are given only doctrinal allegiance, the tendency soon is to wish to match them against all comers rather than to ponder their implications. Thus the orientation becomes political-religious instead of philosophical-scientific.

We revere science correctly, not for its galaxy of "facts," but for the indomitable spirit of never-ending inquiry we associate with the work of great pioneers in physical fields. Men worship religion, however, for quite different reasons. Not high adventure of the mind and soul, but rest and security are promised by the doctrines of theology. Religious assertion often amounts to a "thus far and no farther shalt thou go," while philosophical assertion is that no such limits can ever be set for the human mind.

It amounts to this: Religion without philosophy will inevitably become what the critics of religion charge—wish-fulfillment, closed-mindedness, divisiveness, self-righteousness, superstition and general folly. But philosophy *may* become religion in the higher and transcendent sense of the latter, since a constant impulse towards the broader viewpoint is precisely what evokes the spirit of universal brotherhood, and "binds men together." Doctrines, too, of course, may play a vital part. When pure and undistorted, when known *as* doctrine, they represent the preservative aspect of truth. Doctrines, moreover, can be transmitted with greater accuracy than can philosophy, for the whole secret of philosophy is that, like freedom, it must be created new each day. Yet doctrines are, as Krishna implied, but approximations of truth. We must meditate and reflect upon doctrines to coax their central meanings from places of hiding, and if this sort of attention is not paid, soon the approximations become less and less approximate and "the mighty art is lost."

How are we clearly to distinguish those elements in our thought which are "doctrinal," and which "philosophical"? The student who carefully qualifies his statements of theosophical doctrine with indirect phrasings, we say, may be making an effort in the right direction, or he may simply be unimpressed by the content of the doctrines. How are we to tell? We are not called upon to decide. We can only know that philosophical qualification is necessary if one is to avoid the false surety of religion, and the fact that some may appear to favor philo-

sophical qualification for the wrong reasons makes no essential difference in stating the fact of an eternal necessity.

The language of philosophy is direct enough when setting forth the nature of self-reliance. On any other topic its language is that of paradox and implication. The paradox is a way of showing us that all truth is psychological in its comprehension. A philosophy without paradoxes is a philosophy without depth. A philosophy conscious of its own paradoxes is worthy of the name. But a philosophy ignorant of its own paradoxes is not a philosophy at all, but rather a reintroduction of religion.

It is through philosophy that we seek to understand the "wave of the future" and to identify ourselves with its promise. "Wherever thought has struggled to be free, there the influence of the great Theosophical Movement is to be discerned." These words of William Q. Judge are perhaps more frequently quoted by Theosophists than any other of his phrasings, which must be the best of omens. Perhaps for those who have come to see a great symbolic significance in the presence of William Q. Judge upon the Theosophical scene it is especially natural to speculate that the psychological impact of the Movement is meant to be, above all, encouragement to identify ourselves with "the wave of the future." For Judge looked to the future, looked to the transformations of mind which the ideas of karma and reincarnation could work if "broadly considered." "Raising the Buddhi-Manas of the Race" concerned him, not the gaining in numbers of nominal Theosophists.

We are now beginning to witness world transitions in public opinion on religious matters which are extremely favorable to the philosophical implications of tenets set forth in H.P.B.'s rendition of a Wisdom Religion. But the task of Theosophists is clearly less that of converting masses of people to *belief* in karma and reincarnation, and to the view that H. P. Blavatsky is the greatest teacher of modern times, than it is to keep H.P.B.'s vital link in the chain of the Theosophical Movement untarnished by the appearance of that dogmatism and sectarianism she strove to hold at bay. Madame Blavatsky herself never sought belief, but only fair-minded consideration, and who knew better than did she that even "karma and reincarnation" could be reduced to platitudes and oversimplifications? This, she once pointed out, had clearly happened in India, and must not be allowed to happen again.

# THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

*By* WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

THERE is very great difference between the Theosophical Movement and any Theosophical Society. The Movement is moral, ethical, spiritual, universal, invisible save in effect, and continuous. A Society formed for theosophical work is a visible organization, an effect, a machine for conserving energy and putting it to use; it is not nor can it be universal, nor is it continuous. Organized Theosophical bodies are made by men for their better cooperation, but, being mere outer shells, they must change from time to time as human defects come out, as the times change, and as the great underlying spiritual movement compels such alterations.

The Theosophical Movement being continuous, it is to be found in all times and in all nations. Wherever thought has struggled to be free, wherever spiritual ideas, as opposed to forms and dogmatism, have been promulgated, there the great movement is to be discerned. Jacob Boehme's work was a part of it, and so also was the Theosophical Society of over one hundred years ago; Luther's reformation must be reckoned as a portion of it; and the great struggle between Science and Religion, clearly portrayed by Draper, was every bit as much a motion of the Theosophical Movement as is the present Society of that name—indeed that struggle, and the freedom thereby gained for Science, were really as important in the advance of the world, as are our different organizations. And among political examples of the movement is to be counted the Independence of the Amercian colonies, ending in the formation of a great nation, theoretically based on Brotherhood. One can therefore see that to worship an organization, even though it be the beloved theosophical one, is to fall down before Form, and to become the slave once more of that dogmatism which our portion of the Theosophical Movement, the T.S., was meant to overthrow.

Some members have worshipped the so-called "Theosophical Society," thinking it to be all in all, and not properly perceiving its *de facto* and piecemeal character as an organization nor that it was likely that this devotion to mere form would lead to a nullification of Brother-

---

NOTE.—This article first appeared in *The Path* for August, 1895. Reprinted THEOSOPHY 24: 292.

hood at the first strain. And this latter, indeed, did occur with several members. They even forgot, and still forget, that H. P. Blavatsky herself declared that it were better to do away with the Society than to destroy Brotherhood, and that she herself declared the European part of it free and independent. These worshippers think that there must be a continuance of the old form in order for the Society to have an international character.

But the real unity and prevalence, and the real internationalism, do not consist in having a single organization. They are found in the similarity of aim, of aspiration, of purpose, of teaching, of ethics. Freemasonry—a great and important part of the true Theosophical Movement—is universally international; and yet its organizations are numerous, autonomous, sovereign, independent. The Grand Lodge of the state of New York, including its different Lodges, is independent of all others in any state, yet every member is a Mason and all are working on a single plan. Freemasons over all the world belong to the great International Masonic Body, yet they have everywhere their free and independent government.

When the Theosophical Society was young and small, it was necessary that it should have but one government for the whole of it. But now that it has grown wide and strong, having spread among nations so different from each other as the American, the English, the Spanish, the Swedish and others in Europe, and the Hindu, it is essential that a change in the outward form be made. This is that it become like the Freemasons—independent in government wherever the geographical or national conditions indicate that necessity. And that this will be done in time, no matter what certain persons may say to the contrary, there is not the slightest doubt.

The American Group, being by geographical and other conditions outwardly separate, began the change so as to be in government free and independent, but in basis, aspiration, aim and work united with all true Theosophists.

We have not changed the work of H.P.B.; we have enlarged it. We assert that any person who has been admitted to any Theosophical Society should be received everywhere among Theosophists, just as Masons are received among Masons. It is untheosophical to denounce the change made by the American Group; it is not Theosophy nor conducive to its spread to make legal claims to theosophical names,

symbols and seals so as to prevent if possible others from using them. Everyone should be invited to use our theosophical property as freely as he wishes. Those who desire to keep up H.P.B.'s war against dogmatism will applaud and encourage the American movement because their liberated minds permit; but those who do not know true Theosophy, nor see the difference between forms and the soul of things, will continue to worship Form and to sacrifice Brotherhood to a shell.

---

## THE INDESTRUCTIBLE CAUSE

The fire of patriotism cannot prevail against the higher destiny which will plunge a nation into darkness. All we can do is to change it here and there a little. We have come up through the cyclic law from the lowest kingdoms of nature. That is, we are connected in an enormous brotherhood, which includes not only the white people of the earth and the black people of the earth, and the yellow people, but the animal kingdom, the vegetable kingdom, the mineral kingdom and the unseen elemental kingdom. It includes everything, every atom in this solar system. And we come up from lower forms, and are learning how to so mould and fashion, use and abuse, or impress the matter that comes into our charge, into our bodies, our brains and our psychical nature, so that that matter shall be an improvement to be used by the younger brothers who are still below us, perhaps in the stone beneath our feet. I do not mean by that that there is a human being in that stone. I mean that every atom in the stone is not dead matter. There is no dead matter anywhere, but every atom in that stone contains a life, unintelligent, formless, but potential, and at some period in time far beyond our comprehension, all of those atoms in that stone will have been released. The matter itself will have been refined, and at last all in this great cycle of progress will have been brought up the steps of the ladder, in order to let some others lower still in a state we cannot understand come up to them.

—WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

# "WHO FINDETH NO FAULT . . ."

IT is well known to students of *The Bhagavad-Gita* that not until the ninth chapter does Arjuna reach that attitude of mind which enables Krishna, the teacher, to address him unreservedly. Here, apparently, it becomes evident to Krishna that something decisive has been accomplished by Arjuna, which Krishna identifies, at the outset, with the salutation: "Unto thee who findeth no fault. . . ."

Freedom from fault-finding has obvious advantages, but in the twentieth century, after some three hundred years of progressive development and sharpening of the critical faculty, an expression of this sort may easily generate slightly uncomfortable feelings in the Western reader. While he may say to himself that Krishna does not mean that Arjuna has become "uncritical," or lapsed into a mood of blind belief, in the absence of some more positive definition of Arjuna's state of mind, it is natural for questions to arise. Some clarification comes from noticing that, earlier in the dialogue, Arjuna had expressed what may be properly spoken of as "complaints" to Krishna. "First you tell me one thing is best of all, and then you tell me it is something else," the disciple in effect objects, asking Krishna to settle his doubts, once and for all.

In other words, Arjuna, while striking an attitude of reverence for the teacher, nevertheless holds Krishna responsible for his doubts and feelings of insecurity. "Look at the mess you're getting me into—I don't know which way to turn, any more," might be an approximate version of his feelings, which, when expressed, took the form of a more respectful although querulous utterance. But by the ninth discourse, these feelings had completely evaporated. What Krishna honors Arjuna for, at this point, then, might be termed Arjuna's essential honesty, which by this time had come to the surface and was directing his thought and speech. This basic quality means the end of fault-finding as well as many other things. It means, for example, that Arjuna has stopped expecting Krishna to do for him what no teacher can do for anyone else, and has stopped blaming Krishna, even subconsciously, for the anxieties which formerly oppressed him.

This was no mean achievement. "When veracity is complete," Patanjali declares, "the Yogee becomes the focus for the Karma result-

ing from all works, good or bad." It follows that an honest man is a man strong enough to meet the totality of his Karma, and, possibly, the Karma of his age as well. How does a man gain this measure of honesty? The difficulty, we think, is not in the honesty, but in the wanting of it. And there is honesty, even, in finding this to be the case.

One does not reflect for long upon problems of this sort without having to wonder whether or not hypocrisy—or at least "self-deception"—has a natural role in human evolution. The traits or qualities we commonly regard as "defects" of character—are they inevitable at certain stages of psycho-moral development? Take for example what we call "conceit." There are times when conceit seems almost a necessity for life to be tolerable at all. How could a small-minded man endure association with himself unless protected from extreme depression by a comfortably exaggerated measure of his worth?

Conceit, doubtless, results from some cunning compound of the three qualities which spring from nature. The three qualities are said to be the source of all delusion, and delusion, it might be argued, is that aspect of the great illusion of nature which is personal to human beings. Or, we might say that a delusion is an illusion which a man needlessly imposes upon himself.

Illusions, we shall have to admit, are the condition of life, the very fabric of existence. "For the sake of the soul alone," Patanjali says, "the Universe exists." Maya, then, is the projection of the soul's conception of the not-Self. When there is no longer any not-Self for the soul, there is no longer any Maya, or any Universe.

> Although the Universe in its objective state has ceased to be, in respect to that man who has attained to the perfection of spiritual cultivation, it has not ceased in respect to all others, because it is common to others besides him.

From this it follows that what is needed, for the great mass of mankind, is not emancipation from illusions, but a proper attitude toward them, and a proper attitude toward illusions becomes possible only through a knowledge of the archaic doctrines of the Wisdom-Religion. If one man could remove the illusions of another, and did so, he would be making that other's self-evolution an impossibility. To take away all possibility of external illusion from a man is to kill him, for the physical self is formed of mayavic reflections. Killing a man, of course, does not really take away his illusions, but only separates him from

them for a time—the time of interlude between incarnations. Meanwhile the ego is immediately garbed in another set of illusions—those which belong to the ego in the states after death.

Infallible revelation and the dogmas of religion are other means by which men propose to destroy the illusions of others. The fanatical revealer or prophet insists that his doctrines are portraits of reality. If he has sufficient psychic force, he may be able to "kill" large numbers of men at another level of their being, by invading their emotional life with beliefs which are not their own. The soul has less protection against this sort of interruption, since the soul must always be a party to any kind of psychic invasion; a part of each self-betrayal is carried by the ego with him, through individual affinity or susceptibility, and thus the willful blindness of individual choice is added to the great illusion of nature.

Thus we are led to the conclusion that *human* ignorance or illusion, as contrasted to the great cosmic illusion of Nature, is a composite product made up of both the natural and the personal, the necessary and the unnecessary. Whether the latter component of human ignorance is "unnecessary" in the final analysis, we must leave to the mystery of the freedom of the will; in any event, it is the controllable aspect of the human environment—the illusion which creates the moral problems in human life, and the feelings of guilt and failure.

The individual Arjuna, then, in assessing himself and the field of battle, has to take into account both the great cosmic illusion which he has incarnated to overcome, and the added confusions he has built up along the way. There are two knots of the heart to untie—the knot tied by Nature and the knot tied by himself.

At the outset of the *Gita's* psychological drama, Arjuna seems to have arrived at a place where he recognizes the character of the cosmic knot and knows that he can succeed in untying it only by having Krishna in his chariot. This decision, we may suppose, is comparable to gaining the conviction that the *Gnosis* is indeed the way, the truth, and the light; or, in common parlance, that "Theosophy is *true.*" Remains, then, the personal set of delusions which are Arjuna's own Karma. It is these which are worked out in the course of the dialogue. Halfway through, at the beginning of the ninth discourse, Arjuna makes his second great decision: he becomes one who no longer finds fault. That is, he accepts the project of working out his personal delu-

sions in the same spirit that he had previously accepted Krishna as his teacher. This achievement might be defined as the discovery of the meaning of individual integrity. It is sometimes spoken of as "resignation," sometimes called the "serenity" of the philosopher; here, we have termed it "honesty."

For one moving toward the stance of Arjuna in the ninth discourse, the discovery of his own uncertainty as to whether he really *wants* to be honest with himself can be a frightening thing. What actually happens, during such impasses, is the dawning realization that the Wisdom-Religion is no escalator of inevitable spiritual progress. The projected alliance with "fortune's favored soldiers" does not make of one a veteran of the war. Adopting the true religion is only the beginning, not the end, of the great undertaking. The hazards of the path are not conquered by the initial decision, but only as they appear, one by one, along the way.

There are times when it seems a great pity that the critical energies of students of Theosophy have been so largely devoted to exposing the forms of delusion so evidently present in traditional Christianity. This is already a much worked-over field, with the major engagements won long ago by experts in philosophical and moral analysis. One has only to repeat the logic of other men to duplicate the victories, and it is easily possible for a false sense of triumph to ensue. If it were the case that Christianity was really the primeval source of human delusion, then no harm could come from exploiting such victories to the full. The fact is, however, that the errors of Christianity are so crude, so obvious, and so easily dispossessed of claims to truth that they can be overcome with very little psychological discovery. We have to face the fact that freedom from the verbal forms of Christian dogma does not make us into emancipated human beings. There are still to be recognized and exposed those prior susceptibilities to self-deception which made Christian and all other forms of theological misconception possible in the first place.

The great hurdle for the ex-Christian, or for anyone affected by the habitual attitudes of our so-called "Christian civilization," is recognition that he has inevitably carried over into his Theosophical enterprise many of the underlying attitudes which result from Christian definitions of progress, good and evil, and "salvation." Since "belief" is the great thing in Christianity, it comes hard to one schooled in this out-

look to find that "belief" in Theosophy is not of any great importance. If he imagines that it is, then he is still a Christian, psychologically speaking. A long and rocky road separates the first, thrilling discovery of Theosophy from the still more thrilling realization that when H. P. Blavatsky says in *The Key to Theosophy,* "Faith is a word not to be found in theosophical dictionaries," she really means it.

Part of the "honesty" personified by Arjuna lies in the willingness to acknowledge in oneself the presence of feelings or attitudes which, in terms of the Christian psychology, would condemn the discoverer as a dreadful sinner. The point, here, is not that those feelings or attitudes are fine things to have, but that finding them and examining them need not become occasion for desperate depression and self-accusation. "Non-permanence of human action, deliverance of mind from thraldom by the cessation of sin and faults, are not for 'Deva Egos.' Thus saith the 'Doctrine of the Heart'." So long as our self-esteem can be damaged by any sort of self-discovery, so long are we Christians at heart. The vulnerability of this kind of notion of the self is a far worse defect than any "sin" or "weakness" we may encounter in ourselves, for it is a vulnerability which grows from the heresy of separateness and the personal-God idea rolled into one.

It is a question, then, of which feeling we regard as being more intolerable—the idea that we are blemished by sinful tendencies, or the idea that we can be restrained from self-examination by the mental deposits of Christian belief.

To accept ourselves as we are—rather, to accept the burden of delusions we have inherited from our egoic past—this is the challenge of the ninth chapter of *The Bhagavad-Gita.* The man who no longer finds fault is the man who is no longer horror-stricken because he finds himself still an imperfect human. He accepts his karma, and in doing so, learns to be honest with himself.

If we are sinners of a sort—a thing we are always ready to admit to others in the abstract—then there can be no harm, and possibly much good, in admitting it in particular, privately, to ourselves. Simply the thought that we no longer need to shield ourselves from such dread realizations may cast away a great burden we everywhere carry about. And sins, once their importance is no longer exaggerated, have a way of becoming much easier to overcome. They then take their place, perhaps, with the more natural illusions of nature.

# THE FUNCTION OF ATTENTION IN PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

TRUE study of any branch of knowledge consists in giving the matter of that branch such repetitions of *attentive* consideration that it at length becomes an integral part of the domain of the consciousness, and can at any time, under any correlated stimulus, be made use of by automatic mental action.

True Study of an Art consists, primarily, in the *attentive* repetitions of the action of the physiological organs, involved in the productions of that Art, until that action becomes automatic, and is as well and so naturally performed as any original reflex physiological function.

In these definitions the word qualifying the necessary processes is the adjective *attentive,* denoting the presence of *attention* in the operation. Without this word the definitions would not merely be imperfect, they would be essentially incorrect and misleading.

Only in the quality of being *attentive* can the reiterated consideration and the reiterated action, respectively, result in the *possession,* on the one hand, of a new realm of knowledge, or, on the other hand, of a new area of power.

What is the *nature and manner of expression* of this supreme quality Attention?

An appreciative intellectual grasp of the answer to this question and a realisation of the function of its subject in the processes of human personal evolution, should be recognized as fundamental elements in the knowledge and understanding of the true educationist, be he teacher or not.

The word Attention is used largely, but loosely, in educational employments, yet we have no other word with which, habitually, to express that *attitude of the consciousness* which, in any study or acquisition of power, is absolutely and continuously demanded, in order to ensure intrinsic results. The term *concentration* is more literally cor-

---

NOTE.—This article was first printed (not authored by) H. P. Blavatsky in *Lucifer* for November, 1888, and was once reprinted in THEOSOPHY for March, 1915.

rect in this relation, but concentration has, with most persons, too limited and too special an application to render it available for ordinary use instead of Attention.

Yet the Attention we are discussing, the attention of all knowledge-acquiring processes, may perhaps be better understood and realized if it is regarded as *Concentrated Attention.*

Attention is that condition or attitude of consciousness in which its rays are *steadily and unintermittently centered* upon the thing being done or the subject of study. This may be presented to the consciousness by one or more of the special senses, or it may already be a content of the mind; the special element in the attitude being *the intentness with which the consciousness operates.* This intentness of gaze must proceed to such a degree that all other sensible or mental objects, except *the one,* become excluded from its range.

In the effort to do this—to *maintain* concentrated attention, the Will of the individual is brought into play, and its function in the process may be compared to that played by a burning-glass held between the sun and the surface of an object. If it is intended that the sun's rays shall produce, through the burning-glass, a definite and observable effect, the glass must be held in such a relation to the object that the rays of light converge upon *one spot.* This spot, or focus, then receives the whole force of the rays that pass through the glass; it alone, of all the surrounding surface, is brought out into relief and operated upon. In like manner the Will, in sustaining attention, focuses the rays of the consciousness, with all their inherent dynamic forces, upon one circumscribed area, physiological, mental, or moral, as the case may be, wherein lies the work to be done.

Thus we see that Attention is intentness of Mental Vision, concentrated and maintained by action of the Will. It is not a separate function or property of the mind, like perception, imagination, reason, etc., as some psychologists might lead us to suppose, but *a mode of action,* —the true mode of the Will's action. In other words it is the *definite, efficient expression of the Volition or Will-force* of the individual.

The functions perception, conception, imagination, etc., are *instruments* of the Ego for operating upon the phenomenal world and upon mental appropriations of that world; when one or more of these thus operates with all its force, undiverted from its employment by any surrounding object, then Attention is exhibited.

*Will* is the manifestation or action of the *real human Ego;* Attention designates the mode in which that manifestation is functionally exhibited, and by which alone permanent results are produced.

In relation to the psychological realm in which Attention is a feature, we may formulate the following scheme. This scheme may serve to make the general bearings of the subject clearer and to more definitely indicate the part played by Attention in all psychological phenomena.

The *source* of mental movement arises in Emotion—the desire to know.

The *direction* of the movement lies with Reason—how and what to know.

The *machinery* of the movement is provided by the Mental Activities (Perception, etc.)—the means by which the knowledge is gained.

The *maintaining force* of the movement resides in the Will (the Energy of the Ego.)—the mode by which continuity of operation is ensured.

The efficient relation of the two last groups of factors to each other, and their joint relation to the object under study, are expressed by our term Attention. The Will holds the mental activities employed *rigidly and persistently* to their work.

The Ego, through Volition, can only establish relations with objects external to itself *through the mental activities,* Perception, Conception, Judgment, Imagination, etc., and to effect this, the latter must be maintained in operation in a direct line between the Ego, represented by Volition, and the object to be studied; just as the gun of the sportsman must be held with exact precision longitudinally between his eye and the object he desires to hit. If the gun be allowed to deviate in the least degree from the exact line of vision, the sportsman misses his object; so, also, if Perception, or Conception, or Judgment, or Imagination, whichever of these activities or faculties is in use, is permitted to lose its *direct* bearing upon the work in hand absolute failure of purpose ensues. In this illustration the steady maintenance of the gun in precise position is a parallel to the psychological action of Attention.

When we grasp the full bearing of the truths here pointed out, we cannot fail to perceive the significant relation which the mental attitude of Attention holds to *all* educational processes and employments, nor can we assign it too prominent a position in laying down true and efficient methods of culture. Let Volition, the Mental Activities, the Light

of Reason, the Physiological System of nerves and muscles, and vast mines of possible knowledge, all be provided; what intrinsic and permanent result can be accomplished amongst them if the manner in which they are used does not include Attention?

Modern Education fails, as evident to all thoughtful observers of human life, very largely because of its neglect to maintain this essential factor of personal evolution in its due place. The desultoriness, aimlessness and mental commonplaces of the general adult life around us, spring from this omission.

Modern Education, in its multitude of subjects, in its haste in passing from one subject to another, and in its lack of precise aim, exhibits *desultoriness* in employment of time and faculty.

Desultoriness is the antithesis of Systematic Attention.

Modern Education rules over an area from which nothing new arises as the fruit of *its* fostering care, it brings no new thing into being from out its world of chaos.

This results from its desultoriness of method and action.

The Human Will is, however, a natural *creator* when it operates through *Concentrated Attention,* but education fails in its true mission as a stimulus and guide to individual creative force, because of this unreasonable neglect of a fundamental principle.

*Every area of acquired skill is a new creation;* it has a real, patent existence and is an object of possession and use in the world of human life, which did not exist previous to its evolution by the personal Will operating through the mental activities upon a physiological chaos.

To prevent possible confusion of thought in tracing out the subject, it may be remarked here that there is a mental attitude to which the term, Attention, is commonly applied. This may be termed Passive Attention.

Passive Attention rules the consciousness when one listens to an eloquent speech or interesting lecture.

In such instances the Will is in abeyance, the consciousness being probably held entranced by forces which the Occultist might term *Mantramic.*

Passive Attention also rules when the mind follows an absorbing train of thought. But this form is not that demanded for personal growth; educationally it is of slight value and without necessary relation to our subject.

Attention plays its necessary part in each one of the realms or planes of life to which the human individual belongs:—

1. On the physical plane;—in the physiological realm of the special senses and the nervous and muscular systems. Conscious action under its rule in this realm results in *skill,* the basis not only of all art and artistic performance, but of every nicely adapted movement of the human limbs and frame for practical purpose or for the display of agility and gracefulness.

2. On the mental plane;—in the psychological realm of concepts, comparisons, judgments, deductions, speculations and ideals. On this plane intellectual energy under the control of Attention, creates logical systematic and consecutive forms of thought, true panoramic fields of vision out of detached intellectual details, and new emotional forms of power and beauty.

3. On the moral plane;—in the spiritual realm of supreme truths, vital principles, gropings after the Infinite, the laws of human relationships, and the application of all these to the entire conduct of the personal life. In this supreme area the moral sentiments and spiritual aspirations after perfection of life, concentrate their attention upon *definite details* of personal thought and behaviour, the production of grace of spirit, reliability of disposition, agreement of conduct with principle, altruism in all its effective forms, and the development of a personal influence ever tending towards the evolution of a vitalizing social harmony.

In the evolution of personal life, when the object of its action is an area or detail of any one of these realms, Attention may be termed *specific,* and when the control of the adopted *purpose of existence as a whole* is maintained through its means, establishing an efficient and well-ordered unity amongst the many divisions and details of that purpose, then we may designate Attention as *supreme.*

"Genius" has been defined as "an infinite capacity for *taking pains.*" The expression "taking pains" is merely a synonym for "close attention to *minute details.*" "Close attention to details" takes each brick of which the "mansion for all lovely forms,"—the structure of personal knowledge, capacity and ability, is to be built, and carefully places it in *its due position, cementing it there at once.* The structure so put together is substantial, capacious, beautiful, and efficient.

This structure, the result of infinite pains long continued, is that which the world wonders at and worships and calls Genius. Nearly all men, if first guided and supported along the toilsome track and afterwards urged along it by pressure of their own Wills, might develop some form of power and skill which would elevate them considerably towards that height from which Genius looks down, and thus render the ordinary world much less commonplace, monotonous and unskilful than it is at present. To sum up:—

Concentrated Attention is the expression of the Will, and Will is the central, animating force proceeding from the Ego. Will, operating under the condition of Attention upon the chaos of its attendant world, and co-ordinating the energies, forces and movements of that world, converts it into a realm of form, power, and purpose, centering around the Ego.

This constitutes Personal Evolution resulting at length in a perfected Individuality, the *creation of its own Will.*

---

## Some Sage Advice

If we look at things concerning others and are troubled about them, then trouble is what we get in ourselves. On the other hand, if we look at people as having their own peculiar ways of disporting themselves —why, we are just looking at them.

We cannot help those who do not want to be helped. You cannot go and drill people into doing the right thing or going the right way. All you can do is to be *yourself.* You can only look at others making false moves and injuring themselves, since they will not understand in any other way. So, there is no use worrying about all these folks: *let them do the worrying.* All you have to do is to go about your own business, and stay steady. Be steady, be calm, be cheerful, and just watch the show.

We can teach by example, and that dosen't disturb us as does trying to fix everything for everyone. You know, we must not be Mrs. Fixits! Some people are, and they "fix" according to their *own* ideas. Suppose you could straighten these people out: to do it might be the worst thing in the world for them. They have to learn by their own actions. It is not the things in themselves that are so awful, but the way we look at them makes them fearful.

—Robert Crosbie

# THOUGHTS ON REAL SERVICE

IT has been said that the measure of our spirituality can be gauged not so much by the time devoted to the study of philosophy, commendable as it is, as by our disinterested willingness to be of real service to others, whenever and wherever opportunity arises. Not to be confused with the ordinary duties we perform in the course of our daily routine, undeniably necessary and important though they may be, real service is something set apart—embodying the quintessence of spirituality, emanating, as it does, from the heart devoid of selfish motives.

It is never a hardship nor even an inconvenience, to "render service" to those we love or admire, or whose opinions we value highly, but when occasion presents itself for us to be of real service to those whom we have no personal cause to admire—with whom, indeed, we have nothing in common save our mutual spiritual heritage—it is then a different matter. The measure of our spirituality is tested, and sometimes brought into shining relief, not so much by the actions themselves as by the degree of our willingness, sincerity and selflessness. Real service is, like true sacrifice, both spontaneous and impersonal.

While none is able to change the Karma of others, we may discern much we can do to lighten the karmic burden. However, it cannot be too forcibly stressed that being of service to others does not imply indiscriminate relieving all and sundry of our acquaintance of their rightful responsibilities, since to do so is tantamount to aiding and abetting retrograde forces. Nor should aid be given because we believe it to be our stereotyped "duty" as practicing Theosophists, nor because we, through our unselfish deeds, wish to strengthen our own spiritual development, but only because the cry of the weak has reached the ears and touched the hearts of those who are strong.

In theosophical works reference is occasionally made to people called the "profane," an appellation, however, which connotes no disrespect, reproach or disparagement. "Unenlightened" would perhaps be a more understandable word. Such people we intuitively feel need help, and by a delicacy of approach and with sympathetic understanding of their problems, we may erect a bridge over which they can pass

from their present ignorance. They may then glimpse the "dim star that burns within," by whose radiance, nurtured in deeds of their own sacrifice, they may perceive more of the reality beyond illusion.

A fire can be started with but little fuel, and a kindly act, born of a desire to serve, may well be the spark that ignites in the mind of the recipient a desire to know something of the source from which stem our strength and courage. It is hardly necessary to comb the highways and byways in search of converts, because, attracted by the depth and sincerity of our way of life, our strict adherence to theosophical principles, people may be impelled to open their minds and hearts.

In his contacts with "the unenlightened," the wise man remembers with compassion that he was once as they, and that, after having exhausted this karma, they too will reach, if not surpass, his present stage of development. The time will come, indeed may be fast approaching, when, through the anguish of physical and mental suffering, resulting from the impact of social maladjustments in the current karmic cycle, the material world will be seen in its true perspective. When that time arrives, the disillusioned will demand to know where the way out may be found, and since religious orthodoxy will offer no answer, they naturally will turn for guidance to those who are free of dogma. Cherish, then, we might say to ourselves, those for whom the future is dark and forbidding, and be ever ready and eager to extend a helping hand when you hear the cry for help.

To be able to be of service to those who really need it should be considered a privilege, for when we respond to such a call we are in truth following the steps of great teachers. A study of *The Voice of the Silence* reveals the superlative beauty of renunciation in choosing to forego nirvanic bliss in order to aid those who are groping for the way; the "oneness of all" is not merely a theosophical phrase, but an eternal truism, the meaning of which must be translated into action. Not only by helping those who suffer, but by aligning oneself with all progressive movements—educational, economic and philosophical—which have as their guiding principle the leading of humanity into a calmer and fuller life in which divine possibilities are developed, may one truly give himself in real service.

# NOTES ON THE KEY

THE title of the *Key* sub-section, "Why is there so much Prejudice against the T.S." (p. 271), is perhaps of greater reflective importance than much of the specific material on pages which follow. For there is no doubt that a considerable amount of prejudice against Theosophy exists today, even though neither Spiritualists nor any existing Societies for Psychical Research seem much concerned with attacking Theosophical teachers, writings or programs. As for "the upper ten and their imitators and sycophants," the "wealthy dozens of the middle classes," some very threatening political movements have taken the center of the stage as their objects of fear. The interesting question, then, today, is this: what are the sources of *contemporary* prejudice against Theosophy and Theosophists?

This is but one of the many occasions upon which we are encouraged to ponder the consequences of the failure of the Theosophical Movement of the last century to maintain the integrity of H. P. Blavatsky's position in the world of ideas. The negative attitude towards Theosophy so frequently encountered today is obviously chiefly oriented around disrespect for many proclaimed Theosophists—for the pretentiousness, arrogance and blind dogmatism which has often accompanied "Theosophic" representations. And, curiously, this general attitude of mind is today current among many who are *allies* of the type of Theosophical Movement H.P.B. endeavored to start.

The scholarly world has moved towards appreciation of a need for comparative study of religions; modern historiographers have revised many histories previously written from prejudices of theology and national chauvinism, while psychologists have reopened their investigation of the soul of man. But representatives of all these trends, though perhaps deriving aid in initial impulse from H.P.B.'s Theosophical Society, seem to have rather completely by-passed consideration of Theosophy itself. W. Macneile Dixon, for instance, whose *The Human Situation* rephrases some of the central ideas of Theosophical philosophy, had no formal Theosophical contact whatsoever. Disciplined philosophical thinkers are apt to regard "Theosophical mysticism" as a prime example of *un*disciplined ratiocination in the indulgence of wish fulfillment.

Though "prejudice against Theosophy" exists, it now exists on grounds quite different from those which were influential in 1891, since the old grounds are no longer valid. None of H.P.B.'s leading contentions are now regarded as absurdities by informed readers and thinkers. The evidence is very clear and specific, and there should be some profit in reviewing it briefly:

The philosophical doctrine of karma, once received as a strange complex of ideas attributable to "heathen" religion, if one were a Christian, or to "irrational mysticism," if one were a devotee of scientific mechanism, now is widely known and respected, both in terms of its essential meaning and as a word that finds significant usage in the English language. Comparative studies of the great religious faiths, as advocated by enlightened philosophers and educators, have had much to do with this. Works such as Lin Yutang's *Between Tears and Laughter* and Edmond Taylor's *Richer by Asia* have given strong presentations of the significance of the karma-philosophy, and a treatise such as Simone Weil's *Iliad, Poem of Force,* has connected the idea of karma with the philosophical dimensions of Greek thought, to which modern culture admittedly owes so much inspiration.

The idea of reincarnation has finally been given serious consideration in the academic world, and those English philosophers who seriously advocated its consideration, such as Macneile Dixon, G. Lowes Dickenson, and John MacTaggart, are shown increasing attention by their peers in the field of philosophy. C. J. Ducasse's recent *Nature, Mind and Death* presented the essential logic of the arguments for reincarnation, for the first time, it is believed, to the august members of the American Philosophical Association, while novelists, playwrights and innumerable authors who make a living from the re-presentation of intriguing ideas, have further brought the conception of rebirth before the eye and mind of the public.

H. P. Blavatsky's claim that psychic phenomena and mediumistic data may have a rational, philosophical explanation, is accepted by modern psychic researchers and by many psychologists. Further, in the psychological field, articles appearing in *Psychiatry,* journal of the William Alanson White Psychiatric Foundation, and in books such as Erich Fromm's *Psychoanalysis and Religion* and *The Forgotten Language,* re-enliven and re-define the concept of soul. Striking at a level of interest somewhere in between the two last mentioned types of

defense of "the hidden man" was Gina Cerminara's *Many Mansions,* offering psychic testimony in support of "the magnificent possibility that reincarnation is a truth."

J. B. Rhine's *Reach of the Mind* proceeds from a study of incontestable evidence of extra-sensory-perception to the admission that informed thinkers must now regard such questions as the soul's immortality to again be open questions. Anthropologists have revised oversimplified versions of Darwinian theory, and, in the face of a growing weight of evidence, are prepared to admit the probability that man and not the ape is a primary type, while at the same time the length of man's stay on earth has been increased again and again by anthropological estimates.

While physicists have proceeded to demolish the distinctions between "matter," "energy," and "intelligence," a few biologists have begun to describe the presence of an electro-magnetic field which determines and sustains the form of all cellular structures, thus approaching the concept of the astral body from yet another direction than those implied by psychic phenomena and E.S.P. investigation.

These transformations have resulted in the fact that few, today—and fewer tomorrow—will be shown disrespect for a proclivity to use the word "soul," to wonder about the possibility of the soul's immortality, to give serious attention to the idea of reincarnation, even to proclaim belief in it, or to maintain that the philosophy of karma provides an exceedingly noble and inspiring basis for human ethics. Theosophists, then, we repeat, on the strength of the foregoing, do not today receipt for disrespect from either scholars or the public because of any of the philosophical *ideas* which they hold.

The temper of serious modern criticism is directed not against honest philosophy—as was once unfortunately the case—but is directed against the *lack* of philosophical temper which has been noticeable in so much Theosophical promulgation. The charge that Theosophists represent but another creed and cult, so untrue in regard to H.P.B.'s genuine devotees in the last century, has unfortunately been *made* true by nominal Theosophists in the meantime.

That such a development is a tragedy of the first magnitude can hardly be doubted, and it is not a tragedy to be alleviated by the "logical" expedient of counselling all Theosophists to stop using the word "Theosophy" altogether, and rest their case on the inherent

reasonableness of unnamed Theosophical ideas, put forth as speculations. For, while such a suggestion would be rationally defensible on some counts, its full implementation would destroy one of the subtlest and most important contributions which H.P.B. strove to make—by assertion and demonstration of the existence of a Wisdom Religion present in all times and ages. The conception of the Gnosis, when one reflects upon it, has important relevance to the seriousness with which all philosophical thought may be considered. Men need to feel not only that their particular lines of present thinking have a mathematical possibility of being true, but, also, need assurance that truth in respect to man's inner and higher nature *is* actually known, that it presently exists and that it may be verified and tested. There is high hope in the affirmation that there is a body of *knowledge* which has both served as inspiration for the greatest of human history and which may serve the humblest individual today. This is the crux of Theosophy in a historical sense, and is also "religion" in its purest sense. For religion, in its purest sense, depends upon veneration for a great brotherhood of spiritual and moral instructors. Pure religion is a proper placement of the devotional feeling, and it is such "proper placement" of the religious feeling that average humanity so badly needs. H.P.B.'s own position as an extremely important link in the chain of Great Teachers, to whom allegiance can and may be given, must not be disregarded, and therefore it is that the name Theosophy cannot be deserted.

Faced with all these realizations, what is the Theosophist to do? What is the best way of rescuing "calumniated reputations," and of being "true to the name," Theosophy? Here, the line laid down by H.P.B. herself would seem exceeding clear, even if very difficult to follow. H.P.B. sought above all to make the readers of her major works familiar with the transformations of mind which were characteristic of evolving Western civilization in general and of their own time in particular. Those who undertook such an investigation, in the spirit recommended by so many pages of H.P.B.'s writings, no longer looked upon themselves as "rivals" to the members of religious faiths. They sought, instead, as did she, with sympathetic understanding, whatever common ground and language might serve as a point of departure for educative efforts to aid in transcending the sectarian viewpoint altogether.

Much reading and much thought are mandatory for those who

attempt to fit themselves to continue the task, and it may be interesting for the student to reflect that, even in this regard, H.P.B. has demonstrated her phenomenal greatness: No other Theosophist, whether devoted student or pretender, has been able to evidence anything like her familiarity with the significant works of both ancients and moderns, or her specific awareness of the basic issues occupying the attention of leaders in various fields of contemporary thought. It is not simply that no true Theosophists would try to duplicate the scope of *Isis Unveiled* or the *Secret Doctrine.* The plain fact is that no one can, and it is, perhaps, precisely in the breadth and scope of horizon of H.P.B.'s works that we find clues to the central meaning of Theosophical discipleship.

On page 271, *The Key,* H.P.B. states that "intrinsically, Theosophy is the most serious movement of this age." The most serious is the most subtle, the most serious is always the widest in breadth and scope, and the most serious is also more than apt to be that which requires the greatest effort and discipline. H.P.B.'s wisdom, even a small part of it, can hardly be acquired by any means other than that of following the path she showed—the path of the widest study of which one is capable.

---

Nothing is so much to be feared as any alliance with the despisers of reason; nothing so much to be desired as to follow whithersoever the argument leads.

On this broad and open way of the mind there are no concealments, no pretences, no hidden weapons. Your thoughts and mine cannot win success by lurking in the shadows, or striking at adversaries from behind their backs. They can be challenged, opposed, ridiculed, rejected in open discussion. Denounce the reason, attack it, despise it, you cannot do it to death. It will recover from every wound, and return to the encounter after every defeat.

We shall do very well in the company of reason until we try to account for reason itself. Then we are immediately at a loss, and plunged in the depths of the ocean. Meanwhile we must take as our motto the saying of Terence—'Nothing is so difficult as to be beyond the reach of investigation.' We are not to assume that what is now unknown is for ever unknowable.

—W. MACNEILE DIXON

# STANDING ON HIGH

IT is related that a man once met the devil and accosted him: "How is it that when I conquer you in my body and kill out fleshly lusts, you attack me in my mind, and when I vanquish you there, you resurrect in some other portion of my being?" The devil laughingly replied: "I am glad we understand each other." Also, there is this proverb: "It is a clever trick of the devil to pretend to be dead." There is no outside personal Lucifer, but each human being has within him a lower entity, called by such respectable names as the "personality," and "human nature," which can become, in truth, a satanic power. Nor is it innately wicked, as the theologians would have us believe, but simply so ignorant and badly trained, so close to the lower material rungs of evolution, it prefers to imagine itself the center of the universe, and separate from every other being. All selfishness would appear to be rooted in this feeling of separateness, and every effort of the higher nature toward non-separateness meets with the stubborn resistance of its lower twin.

"Whatever the path taken by mankind, that path is mine," says Krishna in *The Bhagavad-Gita.* In other words, no matter what the lower man does, while there is any hope for his redemption, the Real Man will not depart, but works through the constructive avenues provided. It is often not realized, however, that Duryodhana, the leader of the opposition in the holy, internal war of the Mahabharata, also indicates, through his actions, that whatever the path taken by Arjuna (a symbol for man), *that path is his.* Despite Arjuna's strenuous efforts to elevate his nature, so long as the slightest flicker of self-interest remains, it is worthwhile for Duryodhana to hang on, for cannot the smallest spark of selfishness be fanned into the roaring fire of greed, hate, and lust?

When one views the seemingly incorrigible tendencies of certain aspects of man's being, natural questions arise as to how they can be adequately handled. Can watchfulness be unremittingly sustained without imposing an unbearable strain upon the disciple? Doesn't a sentry become nervous and jumpy from peering out into the unknown darkness, never knowing when nor where the "enemy" will strike?

Besides, there are so many warnings to remember, so many principles to apply; how can one always be sure to remember the right one at the right time?

The advice of the Great Warrior Souls has ever been: TAKE ALTITUDE; never fight the lower man on *his* plane. Take the position of the SELF, the Real, the immortal. From that vantage point alone can evil be vanquished.

It is a common belief, however, that one must fight an enemy with his own weapons, because that is all he will understand. Beware of using them if that *is* what he understands, for he will surely in the end turn them to his own profit. Fight him with what *he does not understand*—a potency or idea from a higher level than that upon which he operates. The opposing forces are never so bewildered as when required to deal with the mysterious and unknown. Aid them to rise to a comprehension of this new kind of warfare and they are no longer enemies, but friends.

One of the great labors of Hercules obliged him to wrestle with and conquer Antaeus, the giant of Libya. Discovering that the longer they struggled on the earth the stronger his antagonist became, the hero lifted the giant high into the air, and, in that rarified element, his enemy's powers deflated. On the *personal* plane one can only perceive from the *personal* viewpoint. Exposed to the shifting breeze of this deceiving state, the lamp of the mind "will flicker and the quivering flame cast shades deceptive, dark, and ever-changing, on the Soul's white shrine." "And then," the text continues, "thy Mind-Soul will become as a mad elephant, that rages in the jungle. Mistaking forest trees for living foes, he perishes in his attempts to kill the ever-shifting shadows on the wall of sunlit rocks."

Consider the example of the wise mother of a large family. She has her numerous tasks to perform, and simultaneously must keep a watchful eye on her children. Without fuss, worry, or constant harpings on what the children should or should not do, she calmly manages the household. The children have no restrictive feeling of being constantly supervised, yet the parent is always quietly aware of what each is "up to." The modern mother who has a much smaller family often causes irritation both to herself and to her offspring through fearful, nervous over-watching. Students can fuss and fume about their "lower nature," as well as over people and things, and thereby give it a morbid impor-

tance, or engender in it a bitter, obstinate disposition.

There is a "divine mountain" which every soul can climb. On that pinnacle, "with eyes and ears in all directions," it is an easy matter to detect the activities of the lower forces and evaluate them with true perspective. From the position of Achyuta, "he who falleth not," one can clearly recognize that which has its source in the above and that which springs from below. Nor does he have to worry about the climate of the inferior nature—its likes and dislikes—if his station is *above* the clouds! "Standing on high," he becomes the lord and director of all he surveys, the wise "disposer of the forces."

"Take the position of the SELF! Act for and *as* the SELF of all creatures." These are not words to be glibly parroted, nor employed as an intellectual formula to be inwardly mumbled, so many times a day. They represent an absolute law in the spiritual world. The door thereto would appear to be through one avenue only: gaining a truer realization of that SELF; for one can hardly take the position of that which he does not to some degree understand. Therefore, "*think, think, think* on the truth that you are not body, brain, or astral man but that you are THAT, and 'That' is the Supreme Soul."

---

## A FREE MIND'S POWER

"I give up," he said, "this situation is utterly hopeless. You just can't talk sense to a Dutchman."

History has proved him wrong, as it proved me wrong, for I wholeheartedly shared his opinion about the ineradicability of Dutch delusions. History always proves those wrong who, after struggling to overcome the delusions of others, throw up their hands and yield themselves to the delusion of despair.

In reality, it is our inability to free our own minds from delusions, our tendency to build up new karma while fighting the old, to give up trying to talk to the Dutchman of all nationalities with whom we have to deal, that blinds us to the tremendous power for dispelling delusion exercised by a mind which is itself free from delusion. The key to the problem of combating delusion therefore appears to be mainly a question of trying to acquire this power.

—EDMOND TAYLOR

# YOUTH-COMPANIONS ASK—AND ANSWER

*BOTH young and old find a fascination in observing a skilled craftsman at work. How might young people be steered from the prevalent spectator attitude to that of an eager participant?*

Education is a stimulation of the mind. In the true sense, then, the fascination of observing a skilled craftsman at work must involve the awakening of the *manas* of the spectator, for only then will there be a lasting impression.

Sometimes the attitude of the skilled craftsman is such as to hold the spectator off at a distance rather than one which will encourage him to come closer and try his hand at it. Certainly the sense of inferiority felt by the novice in the presence of the "Master" must be overcome before rapport between the teacher and pupil can be established. The bridging of this gap between the knower and the learner —the very core of the learning process—is truly amazing. The learner finds something incomprehensible, struggles with it, and, by building from the known to the unknown, by making deductions, eventually achieves an understanding and makes the learning an integral part of himself. The process, however, is not always rapid, and sometimes it is with extreme difficulty that progress is made. And the wise teacher would, realizing this, build confidence at first through simple tasks well done, and, by scaling the difficulty of successive steps, allow for the gradual increments in ability.

In any educational venture the mind of the student must be stimulated and awakened before any real and lasting impression can be made. So young people need to be taught to look beneath the physical skill and to see the problems which the craftsman is overcoming in his work—the limitations of tools, of materials, of the medium, etc. To awaken the mind of the pupil is an intriguing challenge for any teacher and demands ingenuity in order to reach that creative part of the onlooker's nature. A demonstration may be made with the craft of basic principles: how it follows the pattern of nature and life, since anything truly skillful must have proportions and beauty that, as applied

philosophically, must also apply physically. These principles, thus presented, will strike a respondent chord sooner or later in the student. His inner nature will recognize true values, because inwardly he does know them.

In order to avoid the development of the spectator attitude in the appreciation of good craftsmanship, we must beware of acquiring the habit of sublimating our own creative urges. Young people of today too often underestimate their potential, or do not allow it to develop. Our civilization's concept of achievement through competition with others, rather than through self-improvement, may be a great encouragement to the spectator attitude. True education attempts to bring the knowledge within to the surface. Children at a very young age want to try and experience things for themselves; unfortunately this attitude is soon wiped out by adults, who, since they may have more skill or experience, do not want the child to fumble through a job which they can do in half the time and with greater proficiency.

The entire question of the spectator attitude, it would seem, is a part of the present day trend to relinquish the individual's responsibility. This giving up of responsibility occurs in government, thought, action and even entertainment. If we could reveal to children and young people the importance of being self-sufficient in even one sense, a great step would be taken. Only when people encourage others to try new tasks and to endeavor in the direction of self-improvement rather than competition, will progress towards participation quicken.

*In study do we take the great universal ideas and make something small, rigid and personal out of them? What is the answer to this?*

The personality is, so to speak, an inverse reflection of the Real Man. And, in this sense, it contains as much and as little of reality as any reflection does. Universal ideas are useless as only ideas. They must be applied. But the applications, however complete, can never become the universal ideas. The tendency to interpret these ideas in terms of present situations is natural and necessary. But perhaps we identify the idea with the application. Perhaps we are unconsciously afraid or insecure and so cling to what seems a satisfactory understanding or interpretation of a universal idea.

It is obvious that no matter what degree of conscientiousness and devotion students embody, we are, nevertheless, bound to comprehend

only a part of universal truths until we become universal beings or Mahatmas.

In regard to *making* "something small, rigid and personal" out of the great universal ideas, this is impossible. What happens, however, is that men are prone to take a truth and worry it until it becomes a half-truth, and the less radiant validity it has, the more belligerently will they defend it. The plainest example of this tendency can be seen in the history of *organized* religion. A great sage leaves for mankind certain truths, in as flexible form as is possible; before long these are seized by a self-appointed elite, which claims personal and exclusive access to *The* Truth. But in spite of all the dogmatizing carried on by authoritarian religions, the truth itself can never be completely hidden. This is why H. P. Blavatsky (in *Isis Unveiled*) was able to show the essential identity of all the world's religions. The fact that these relative truths—even after thousands of years of misrepresentation—still hint at the existence of universal truths, proves that it is impossible to make the *great* universal ideas small and personal.

Why are people prone to personalize relative truths? Undoubtedly there are many answers to this. Basically, the fact that people *try* to do so is evidence of their general misunderstanding of the purpose of human existence. For the quest for truth, the development of the divine powers latent in man, and the cooperation with all of life in the grand educational processes of nature called evolution, are in direct opposition to the belief that wisdom can be categorized. Theosophists should be much less apt than most to pigeonhole universal ideas; since the great mass of people are not aware of the necessity for inward growth, the natural result is that the force of personality predominates in all types of thought.

*Why do lecturers at U.L.T.—when examining the significance of the Theosophical Movement—consistently refer to early Neoplatonism as a salient factor?*

Speaking historically, Plato linked the Eastern and Western metaphysical traditions in a grand synthesis. It was the Neoplatonists, however, who harnessed the force of Platonic ideas in crucial times of theological ascendancy by championing free thought. This was clearly a phase of the Theosophical Movement, a movement which opposed the dogmatism of early Christianity. The Theosophical Movement,

then, as a semi-organized attempt to break the yokes of ignorance and superstition binding Western Man, dates back to the Eclectic Theosophical School of the fourth century.

Such a Movement can be studied under two aspects: *(a)* as a body of ideas known as the Wisdom-Religion, and, *(b)* as a completely unbiased attitude of mind in the pursuit of truth—a *method* which presupposes the universal availability of truth, even though veiled by myth and symbol. The method has been called eclecticism, *i.e.,* "the refusal to accept a single set of formulas or conventions, coupled with a determination to select from all sources that which is good and true" *(Encyclopedia Britannica).* Considered in these terms, eclecticism imposes certain philosophical and scientific standards of judgment, such as impartial reason in the interest of justice and morality, which, if adhered to, make sectarianism and intolerance actually impossible.

In Ammonius' school of theosophy, application of the eclectic method was a practical necessity in verifying the validity of the Secret Doctrine and the claim that all religions had sprung from it. There was an organic combination, then, of doctrine and the mental prerequisites vital in ascertaining truth. In the twentieth century the strategic necessity of practicing this unbiased spirit of inquiry is perhaps not quite so obvious. For H.P.B brought the philosophy, William Q. Judge simplified the form, and it may seem to be our task just to study it; this is an attitude held by many students. There is nothing intrinsically bad about such an attitude so long as the idea that "we special people have a special truth" does not flourish, but, after all, the obligation of understanding the present Theosophical Movement also means understanding the society it is working through, and the race-mind versions of many half-truths.

The spirit of open-minded inquiry will always be crucial in maintaining the health and vigor of Theosophy. Early Neoplatonism, it seems, stands as a "salient factor" in studying the Theosophical Movement in two ways. First, historically, it can be considered as a forerunner of the present effort. Secondly, it provides a means by which we can practically realize the need and value of exercising independent, open-minded quests for truth.

# NEAR THE HOLY FIRE

IN answer to the question, "What is the Soul?" Yajnavalkya replies: "It is the Consciousness in the life-powers. It is the Light within the heart." In further elucidation, he sets forth a systematic treatise on the states of consciousness known as Waking and Dream. The reason for this seems clear, for from no other point of view, perhaps, can the powers and functions of Soul be so clearly portrayed. To explain the nature of anything, it is necessary that the subject be presented in terms of experience familiar to the inquirer—otherwise, no accepted point of departure exists, no mutual ground of agreement, upon which the structure can be built.

Failure to establish this mutual ground, on the part of expounders of theosophical doctrine, results in confusion and misunderstanding in the minds of inquirers. What good is achieved, for example, by telling newcomers to Theosophy about the highly abstract and metaphysical tenets of the philosophy before they have gained some perception of the Three Fundamental Propositions of *The Secret Doctrine*? Can Rounds and Races be understood without a preliminary knowledge of Cycles? Is it possible to grasp the fine distinctions and relationships that exist between the threefold powers of the God-head (Atma-Buddhi-Manas) before the person has become convinced that man is something more than his body? It was the advice of Robert Crosbie always to look for "points of agreement" in the minds of those we seek to help—to lead them upward, step by step, from ideas they at present understand to newer and wider visions, which are the logical outcome of their accepted views. "No one," said Wm. Q. Judge, "was ever converted to Theosophy. Each one who *really* comes into it does so because it is only an extension of previous beliefs."

Theosophy, in its fundamental character, is simple, and applicable within the experience of the humblest minds—yet, in its depths, ramifications and details, provides a challenge for the greatest metaphysician.

Waking and Dreaming are experiences familiar to every man. By extending the knowledge of these perfectly natural states, it is possible

---

NOTE.—The study herein pursued is based on an edition entitled *Selections from the Upanishads and the Tao Te King* (The Cunningham Press, Los Angeles 32, California, 1951), in which the Upanishadic writings are presented in the translation of Charles Johnston.

to explore the wider horizons of the nature and genius of the Soul. We find Yajnavalkya telling the king that "This Spirit of man wanders through both worlds (waking and dream) yet remains unchanged," for the unchanging nature of the Spirit is an idea that must be grasped before further enlightenment can be gained. There is THAT in man which is free and unmodifiable, which enters into the various states of consciousness, experiences the "qualities" belonging to those states, and emerges therefrom unchanged.

From the first hour of probation to the day of final attainment, the one unchanging canon, the strongest armor of protection to the disciple, is an ever-mindful perception of the unmodifiable nature of the Spirit within. Even for the man who is on the threshold of divinity, it is admonished: "Hold fast to that which has neither substance nor existence. Listen only to the voice which is soundless. Look only on that which is invisible alike to the inner and outer senses." *(Light on the Path.)* Once grasp this idea, said H. P. Blavatsky, and all the rest becomes easy. The secret of detachment has been learned—ambitions fade away, longings cease to gnaw at the heart, desires and antipathies vanish into thin air, "for the Spirit of man is free, and nought adheres to the Spirit." This perhaps is but the Upanishadic manner of affirming the First Fundamental Proposition of *The Secret Doctrine.*

The idea that Spirit alone is the one unchanging Reality in the Universe carries with it the corollary proposition that all else besides Spirit, that is to say, all that is modifiable, is subject to flux. This unstable nature of "things" and "states" and "conditions" applies not only to waking and dreaming, but to any and all of the states of consciousness possible to the Spirit of man. It applies to the highly developed stages of *Yoga,* or concentration, and to the after-death states of *Devachan* and *Kamaloka.* It applies, also, to the thousand and one moods and sub-states of mind that, in their totality, make up the disposition of the waking man—to anxiety, joy, sorrow, anger and gloom. *States* of consciousness are temporary, but the Experiencer of them (or Consciousness itself) is eternal. This single idea alone, if realized and applied, will enable any human being to stand aloof from his troubles, to evaluate his experiences, and to traverse the bayous of life in a far more intelligent and detached manner.

The chief cause of suffering lies in man's selfish and personal attachments for "things" and "beings," in the self-identification of soul with

"states" and "conditions" which, by their very nature, are changeable and subject to end. But why should any being of spiritual self-conscious perceptions allow his consciousness to become completely immersed in a temporary state of despondency? Why should a God, which man truly is, doubt the power and genius of his Higher Self, or question the ability of Soul to rise instantaneously, if he so chooses, from the darkest depths of the valley of gloom? This Spirit of man only *seems* to be wrapped in despondency and fear. He only seems to change—but does not at all.

It may perhaps be a new idea to some that "The Spirit of man has two dwelling-places; both this world, and the other world," while "the borderland between them is the third, the land of dreams." When the ordinary man speaks of *home,* he refers to his physical, material abode, the domicile of his personal lower self. Sacred though it may seem, this dwelling of the waking man is but a symbol, a physical-plane representation of a home far more real and enduring—the home of the Soul. "Home," to the Sage, means the place of spiritual regeneration, the divine estate of the Ego, to which all fully enlightened Manasa retire, not only at the time of death, but also every night of their lives, where they share consciously the wisdom of the Gods. H. P. Blavatsky spoke repeatedly of her real spiritual home, to which she expected almost daily to be called by Those who sponsored her mission in the world.

Wm. Q. Judge, during the period of his earthly career, was known and spoken of among friends as "the Greatest of the Exiles." Man on earth is but an exiled God from heaven. Like the prodigal son of the New Testament, he goes out from his father's house and dwells among the swine (the ignorant personalities of himself and others) and feeds upon the husks. But every night of his life, while the body rests, this sleepless Spirit escapes through the doorway of dreams. "Then, clothed in radiance, returns to his own home, the gold-gleaming Genius, swan of everlasting." There, he feels at home; there, he tastes the waters of immortality; and there, he knows he is a God.

> There are no chariots there, nor steeds for chariots, nor roadways. The Spirit of man makes for himself chariots, steeds for chariots and roadways. Nor are any delights there, nor joys and rejoicings. The Spirit of man makes for himself delights and joys and rejoicings. There are no lotus ponds there, nor lakes and rivers. The Spirit of

man makes for himself lotus ponds, lakes and rivers. For the Spirit of man is Creator.

This ennobling view of man as Creator stands in striking contrast to the Western religious idea which places man at the bottom of the ladder, and makes of him the footstool of the Almighty, a poor and weak caricature of the God he really is. Yet, in stating this truth, the *Upanishads* present nothing new. They merely echo the teachings of the eternal Secret Doctrine, which is the fountainhead of all the world's religions.

Man, according to Theosophy, is Creator in a far more real and dynamic sense than we have hitherto been likely to suppose. Everyone is aware of the creative ability of the *hand,* of the innumerable evidences in arts and crafts that the human being is able to mold matter to his Will, to produce before the eye forms and patterns of inimitable beauty of design. But who has ever measured the creative potentialities of the *mind,* the power of the awakened Will, or the force and magnitude of Spirit set in motion by a pure and concentrated heart?

The experience of dreaming is perhaps the sole surviving landmark, in this age of negation, of the mysterious power of thought known to the Occultists as *Kriyasakti,* whereby the mind is enabled to produce external results by its own inherent energy. Time was, in the purer ages of the past, when man possessed the power of causing any idea to manifest itself externally by concentrating his attention and Will upon it. This, he still does in the dream state. (The forms seen in dreams, it should be remembered, while subjective to the waking man as he views them in retrospect, are *objective* and real to the Ego who has created them.) And this could also be done in waking life, were it not for his blind materialistic disbelief. But though he has lost the power of producing such immediate phenomenal results on the external plane (which today would be called magic), man nevertheless is still Creator in his world. Whether aware of the fact or not, he alone is the maker of his body and its humors, of the desires and feelings that well up inside himself—yea, of the very circumstances and events of life which surround him, and which he is so prone to blame upon outside agencies. The power of human thought and feeling is enormous, and while the result is not instantaneous, as it is in dreams, and as it was also in waking life in happier days, its force nevertheless is real and potent, and over a period of years and lives, takes visible

shape, surrounding the Ego with the good and evil environments of his own begetting.

> When he enters into rest, the Spirit of man rises above this world and all things subject to death. For when the Spirit of man comes to birth and enters a body, he goes forth entangled in evils. But rising up at death, he puts all evils away.

In this paragraph, there is a wealth of instruction for the reformer, for all those devotees who work along the lines of social and material change. Not that the motives of such individuals are to be condemned, nor can it be denied that in some instances the changes effected on the material plane add greatly to the cause of human progress—at least, in a palliative way. The mistake made by most reformers, in the light of the *Upanishads,* is in the assumption that this Earth, looked upon as a mere lump of dead matter, is man's home, whereas it is not. The physical Earth and the body of man have always been considered in the esoteric philosophy of the ancients as "vehicles": (1) as fields of experience for the Soul, individually and collectively, and, (2) as a means of sloughing off the dregs and impurities of the human crucible, the residue from mistakes made and lessons learned by the Soul in its upward march. The work of the true reformer, therefore, is to open up the path to real understanding, and thus speed the Pilgrim on his way.

We are here, said Robert Crosbie, not because of our virtues, but because of our defects. The Spirit of man must continue to incarnate and subject himself to the entanglements of evil until all imperfections are removed and the genius of the Soul made manifest. Then indeed does he put all evils away, not only at the time of death and during the nightly interlude of sleep, but also during daytime activity which he has consciously undertaken for the purpose of helping all lonely, footsore Pilgrims on their journey back to the Sacred Seat—their true home.

---

No man is an *Iland,* intire of it selfe; every man is a peece of the *Continent,* a part of the *maine;* if a *Clod* bee washed away by the *Sea, Europe* is the *lesse,* as well as if a *Promontorde* were, as well as if a *Mannor* of thy *friends* or of *thine owne* were; any mans *death* diminishes *me,* because I am involved in *Mankinde;* And therefore never send to know for whom the *bell* tolls: It tolls for *thee.*

—JOHN DONNE

# ON THE LOOKOUT

## "Time and Eternity"

For several reasons Theosophical students will note with interest the appearance of Princeton philosopher W. T. Stace's *Time and Eternity.* First, Dr. Stace, who has previously been identified with the position of "atheism," demonstrates that his rejection of "God" has never meant the rejection of the spiritual nature of man, nor rejection of the symbolical mystical unity for which the colloquial "God" is an inappropriate term. Secondly, the most abstruse metaphysical questions are seen as having a subtle relevance to education. For the realm of sublime metaphysics, as Stace sees it, is simply an extension of some of man's deepest inward feelings. He writes that "anyone who has taught young students Plato or the Upanishads knows that they receive such views readily—because there is something in themselves which answers back."

## The Source is Man

Stace's researches are in harmony with the intent of the second object of the Theosophical Movement, and his conclusions derivative from the logic and philosophy of the First Object. The Princeton University Press's jacket summary is illustrative on the latter point:

> This book contends that all genuine religion has its source in the mystical element in human nature which is not confined to the great mystics—although it reaches its highest development in them—but is present in some degree, realized or unrealized, in all normal human nature. The higher religions of Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism spring from one source or experience which is, however, differently interpreted intellectually, thus giving rise to different and contradictory religious beliefs and doctrines.

## A Definition of Religion

Dr. Stace begins and ends *Time and Eternity* with reference to a most provocative definition of religion provided by Alfred North Whitehead:

> Religion is the vision of something which stands beyond, behind, and within, the passing flux of immediate things; something which is real, and yet waiting to be realized; something which is a remote

possibility, and yet the greatest of present facts; something which gives meaning to all that passes, and yet eludes apprehension; something whose possession is the final good, and yet is beyond all reach; something which is the ultimate ideal, and the hopeless quest.

Stace's subsequent discussion may be correlated with H.P.B.'s remarks on the nature of deity in the first portions of both *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine,* and with her statement in the *Lucifer* article "What Is Truth?" that "it is often as useful to know what a thing is *not* as to learn what it *is.*" Stace continues:

Whitehead's words are paradoxical. The meaning cannot be less than that paradox and contradiction are of the very essence of that "something" itself.

## WHAT RELIGION MEANS

And one can see why. For religion is the hunger of the soul for the impossible, the unattainable, the inconceivable. This is not something which it merely happens to be, an unfortunate accident or disaster which befalls it in the world. This is its essence, and this is its glory. This is what religion *means.* The religious impulse in men *is* the hunger for the impossible, the unattainable, the inconceivable—or at least for that which is these things in the world of time. And anything which is less than this is not religion—though it may be some very admirable thing such as morality. Let it not be said that this makes religion a foolish thing, fit only for madmen—although indeed from the world's point of view the religious man *is* a madman. For, mad or not, this impulse lies deep down in every human heart. It is of the essence of man, quite as much as is his reason.

## "THE NEGATIVE DIVINE"

By these words, employed as a chapter heading and also intermittently throughout *Time and Eternity,* Dr. Stace seeks to prove that anthropomorphism is actually both a rejection of philosophy and a rejection of religion in the latter's purest sense. He has tapped Theosophical currents in Western mysticism by way of Meister Eckart and Jacob Boehme, and is familiar with Hinduism and Buddhism. This is the meaning of the "negative divine," as Stace extracts it from the *Upanishads:*

Turning now to Hinduism, we find there a wealth of language expressing the negative character of the divine. From the Katha Upanishad: "He who has perceived that which is soundless, intangible,

formless, undecaying, tasteless, odorless, eternal, without beginning, without end . . . is freed from the jaws of death." Brahman is without physical attributes. He is "colorless, odorless, formless." He is "beyond space, beyond time." But neither can mental or psychological attributes be ascribed to him. He is "mindless," wholly impersonal. No predicates whatever, either physical or non-physical, apply to him. He is undifferentiated unity, indeterminate, "beyond relation, featureless, unthinkable, in which all is still." He is "the Self . . . who is beyond the senses, who is formless, inexpressible, beyond all predicates." "If one knows him as Brahman the Non-Being, he becomes merely the non-existent. If one knows that Brahman is, then he is known as the real in existence." This is a warning that one must pass beyond the negative divine to the positive. But it just as plainly asserts the aspect of God as Non-Being. Finally, the Swetasvartara Upanishad declares that he is "without qualities."

## India, Cradle of Profundity

From these illustrations Dr. Stace proceeds to set forth one of his central theses:

> Certainly India was the great home of the negative conception of God, although the positive conception as well was fully developed there. And that the Christian mystics derived, through indirect channels, an influence which can be traced back to its ultimate source in India, is likely enough. But the historical origins and causation of a doctrine have nothing to do with the questions of its religious necessity and truth. And I shall maintain that the negative divine is in fact an essential element in the developed religious consciousness of man. For I shall show that the conceptions of the Mystery of God, and His "incomprehensibility," which are in no way peculiar to the Indian tradition, but are surely necessary elements of the fully developed religious consciousness anywhere, are practically equivalent to the conception of the negative divine. That conception, in fact, does no more than express in explicit terms, and in the language of religion, what all thoughtful men at least dimly feel—the ultimate mysteriousness of the universe. If so, it is absurd to call it especially Indian. The most that can be said is that, among the great religions, it has been given its most emphatic expression in India, a less emphatic but still very definite expression in Christianity and Judaism, while in Islam it is implicitly present but undeveloped.

## A Mine of Theosophic Distinctions

The forms of analysis suggested pack *Time and Eternity* with observations of similar significance and interest to Theosophists, although

such students should also not be surprised to feel that Dr. Stace is at other times philosophically unsatisfactory. The final quotation occurring in the last chapter should further illustrate the cogency of Stace's reasoning, but also indicates an overly negative conclusion as to the "nature of deity," especially in paragraph six:

> Religious truths depend wholly on religious intuitions. In other words, our appeal must be only to basic human intuitions, not to any "facts." And my contention is that the interpretation of religion which has here been set out accords with, and that the opposite interpretation jars upon, and is discordant and disharmonious with, the following specific intuitions, to wit:
>
> (1) The intuition which expresses itself in the proposition that God is a mystery beyond all human understanding.
>
> (2) The connected intuition which expresses itself in the proposition that the blessedness of God is "the peace of God *which passeth all understanding.*"
>
> (3) The intuition which expresses itself in the proposition that there is no blessedness in finite things, but only in the infinite—which is false if blessedness is taken to mean anything comparable with natural happiness.
>
> (4) The intuition which expresses itself in the proposition that God is infinite; which He cannot be, if He is one among other things, a being standing in relation with the things of this world.
>
> (5) The intuition which expresses itself in the proposition that God is eternal; which He cannot be unless He belongs to an order wholly other than the order of time.
>
> (6) The intuition which expresses itself in the proposition that God is the Void; which cannot mean anything except that His being is a total blank to the logical intellect, and that He cannot be found by proceeding along the threads of the web of inter-relationships among the existences which constitute the natural order.

## Buddhism and Modern Psychology

Those who have noted the increasing mention of Buddha and Buddhism in the works of clinical psychologists and psychiatrists will find of especial interest an article, "Modern Psychology and Buddhism," by Bhikkhu S. Wimalasila Tissa, in the August *Maha-Bodhi,* journal of the Maha-Bodhi Society. The article leads the issue, leaving no doubt of the fact that the largest Buddhist society in the world is favorably disposed towards the efforts of the modern psychologists.

Bhikkhu Tissa's analysis of the common ground between Buddhism and modern clinical work is succinct and suggestive. He indicates that

the urge within every human being to live a "higher life" involves him in an "unceasing battle within," and that the difficulties of the struggle also lead him, rather paradoxically, to seek assistance. Some turn to the traditional God of the Christians by way of prayer, but, "unfortunately the help usually obtained by such means only acts as a respite and after a little rest, the battle rages as before, perhaps even more intensely than it did previously; there is possibly a greater feeling of guilt or unworthiness when the lower natures prevail." The *Maha-Bodhi* article continues:

> Of recent years more and more people have at such times of crisis consulted a Psychologist; perhaps there has been an actual physical breakdown under the stress of the 'battle' and the ordinary Medical Practitioner, being unable to effect a cure, sends the case to a Psychologist as a last resort. Be it as it may, there is undoubtedly an increasing number of people who are recognising that Psychology can and does play an important part in resolving these discordant conditions. There is one big difference, however, between the help asked for and sometimes given by prayer and that which is offered by Psychology. As said before, in the first case, it is only a temporary respite, the enemy has not been really banished but there is a short armistice, as it were, before the battle rages just as fiercely as ever. In the latter case, that of Psychology, the enemy itself is attacked and the patient enabled to see that in actual fact he was only fighting shadows—the enemy has no real existence apart from his own mind—the forces which have been successfully fighting in ambush—like the guerilla soldiers of the present day—are brought out of their hiding places in the subconscious mind and when observed in their true perspective are seen to be small insignificant beings—or to be really more truthful, they are discovered to have no reality at all but to be just illusion. To use an Indian simile—the deadly snake has turned out to be nothing more than a piece of rope. This then is true victory, for once the enemy has ceased to have any substance or reality what fight can there be! In reality the enemy is Ignorance.

## "With True Science Allied"

> We see then that the primary function of the Psychologist is to bring out of their hiding place in the depths of the mind those factors and impulses, fears and repressions which cause us discord with its accompanying pain and suffering. In other words Psychologists dispel Ignorance—they teach us to know ourselves.
>
> What has all this to do with Buddhism? one might well ask. Well, first of all, far from being a new science, psychology is at least 2,500 years old. The Buddha was the first and the greatest Psychologist

the world has known. He saw suffering all around him, suffering not only physical but mental; he saw the futility of the existing ceremonies and sacrifices to the Gods, and after an arduous and almost fatal quest, failing time and again but never giving up, he found the secret and the remedy for such suffering. This was the message He gave to the world—not a new religion; no new Gods or Heavenly Potentates—but just a few simple truths which if followed would lead to the end of suffering and that state of lasting Bliss which he called Nibbana.

What was taught in India 2,500 years ago has and is still being confirmed by all the great scientists of the world. In fact Buddhism is the only Teaching which can stand up to the rigid tests of our modern Scientists who are almost daily proving by their experiments and evolved instruments and technique the observations and findings of that first great Psychologist, Gautama Buddha.

## MAN'S SELF-MADE MISERY

A 1952 edition of *The Dhammapada,* issued by the Maha-Bodhi Society of India, contains what appears to be an excellent philosophical translation of key passages which illustrate the natural alliance between much of psychiatry and Buddhist psychology. Remembering that Freud's investigations were conducted in the context of psychic wreckage caused by the false pietism of traditional Christianity, it is easy to appreciate his general abhorrence of religion and the similar feelings of his followers. For Freud found, on every hand, "beings who see fear in the non-fearsome" and "beings who are ashamed at what is not shameful."

The "Canto of Hell" of *The Dhammapada* concludes with verses which, for the percipient reader, establish a distinction between true religion and false religion, and likewise explain the psychological dangers of conventional religious morality:

Beings who are ashamed at what is non-shameful,
Who are unashamed at the shameful,
Embrace false views and go to a woeful state.

Beings who see fear in the non-fearsome.
And no fear in the fearsome,
Embrace false views and go to a woeful state.

Beings imagining wrong in what is not wrong,
And viewing as not wrong what is wrong,
Embrace false views and go to a woeful state.

Beings knowing wrong as wrong,
And what is right as right,
Embrace right views and go to a happy state.

The Maha Bodhi rendition seems preferable to many others on the particular points discussed, since the substitution of "go to a woeful state" for "being consigned to hell"—as some other translations put it—makes it clear that Buddha was referring to *self-imposed* confusions of mind and not to a "place" of punishment.

### Review on Hypnotism

If increasing interest in hypnotism is a phase of the twentieth century's attraction by psychic powers, Theosophists can at least be thankful for the considerable number of warnings against the dangers of hypnotic practice which are now appearing in print. A *This Week* discussion, "Hypnotism is Dynamite," is introduced by these summarizing sentences:

> Quack hypnotists are claiming they can cure everything from insomnia to alcoholism, but how do they pay off? With misery and suffering. Here is the story of a growing menace that the law doesn't touch. . . .

The writers, Ward Cannel and Leonard A. Paris, seem particularly anxious to establish distinctions between "competent hypno-therapy" and amateur meddling, but the public will be able to read between the lines the fact that no matter how "competent" the practitioner, hypnotism is still a risky business. In fact, the authors state that "hypnosis is one of the least known and understood of all the healing arts."

### Free-for-All

Cannel and Paris illustrate the quack experimenting that is being encouraged by curiosity hunters:

> In one neat suburban home, a salesman had turned his cellar into a hypnotism clinic. His advertisement in the local newspaper had brought in a gas-station attendant, a television star, an advertising agent, a high-school girl and several housewives. Some wanted only entertainment. But others had come to rid themselves of specific complaints. The salesman hypnotist admitted that he had learned hypnotism from a book advertised in the back of a mystery magazine 10 years ago. Since then he has treated hundreds of people—for insomnia, stuttering, smoking and drinking, and even inferiority complex.

## TOO MUCH HURRY

The use of hypnosis, as the authors state, was clearly spurred by World War II. War psychoses seemed to call for "short-term" measures in treating patients and, as an after-effect, "pseudo-science pounced on public interest." Result: a growing boom in amateur hypnotism. (In justice to the professional hypno-therapists, however, it should be made clear that hypnosis designed to secure a free flow of information during psychoanalysis is of a very different nature from that used to "paralyse" a "bad habit." Yet some of the after-effects will of necessity be similar, and perhaps Cannel and Paris do a service to the general public by emphasizing the dangers rather indiscriminately and thus preventing people from supposing that only one type of hypnosis is "dynamite.")

Other significant statements in the Cannel and Paris article are:

> Hypnotism is based on *submission to authority.* It is the response of child to parent, follower to leader. To be hypnotized you must say in effect, "Tell me what to do."
>
> Leading psychiatrists and experts in the field have discovered that nearly everyone would like to be hypnotized. The lure? Escape from reality, from indecision.
>
> But science points out these dangers:
>
> 1. Where hypnotism removes symptoms, an illness may be obscured or prolonged.
>
> 2. Where hypnotism tampers with a mental illness and not its causes, a personality may be in danger.
>
> 3. Where hypnotism promises mastery of the mind, a habit as bad as narcotics may be formed.
>
> Case histories bear out these warnings.

## PROFITABLE HYPNOTISM

*Fate* magazine for December, 1952, recounts a typical use of hypnosis to serve criminal ends. A smuggler was discovered to have been passing stolen goods across the Austro-Italian border by the simple means of hypnotizing respectable people and causing them to transmit gold and currency. A prominent businessman, when the contraband was discovered, disclaimed all knowledge of its presence in his suitcase. And while this sort of story would obviously not ordinarily be believed by the police, an American psychologist happened to be present at the time of the search and diagnosed the condition of the suspect.

By midnight of the same night the businessman, still under hypnosis, was followed to a secret rendezvous and the criminal operator discovered. The old claim to the effect that no one can be hypnotized to do anything "against moral compunctions" has now been fairly well disproved by such instances of crime through hypnosis. After all, even if the claim were an unalterable law, it would only mean that a man could not be led by hypnotic suggestion to commit obvious murder, as with an axe, while he *might* be led to sabotage or acts having no readily perceptible human consequences.

## The Honest Doubts of Sigmund Freud

Theosophists who have been unfavorably impressed by various aspects of Freudian theory should also know that the pioneer of psychoanalysis distrusted hypnosis, whether as an aid to psychic rehabilitation, or in connection with psychoanalysis, even when *administered by "competent" practitioners.* Freud's lecture on "The Analytic Therapy" contains the following observations:

> For years I made use of hypnotic treatment, first with prohibitory suggestions and later combined with Breuer's system of the fullest inquiry into the patient's life; I can therefore speak from wide experience about the results of the hypnotic or suggestive therapy.
>
> It was not reliable in any respect. It could be employed in certain cases only and not in others; with some much could be achieved by it, and with others very little, one never knew why. But worse than its capricious nature was the lack of permanence in the results; after a time, if one heard from the patient again, the old malady had reappeared or had been replaced by another. . . . The exercise of the hypnotic method makes as little demand for effort on the part of the patient as it does on the physician. The method is in complete harmony with the view of the neuroses generally accepted by the majority of medical men. The practitioner says to the nervous person: "There is nothing the matter with you; it is merely nervousness, therefore a few words from me will scatter all your troubles to the winds in five minutes." But it is contrary to all our beliefs about energy in general that a minimal exertion should be able to remove a heavy load by approaching it directly without the assistance of any suitably devised appliance. In so far as the circumstances are at all comparable, experience shows that this trick cannot be performed successfully with the neuroses. . . . Hypnotic therapy allows the patient to remain inactive and unchanged, consequently also helpless in the face of every new incitement to illness.

## HYPNOTISM AND ALLIED ARTS

In the light of the current discussions of hypnosis, Theosophists will profit from a reading of H. P. Blavatsky's article, "Hypnotism and its Relations to Other Modes of Fascination." (THEOSOPHY 31, 4.) Here basis is laid for suspending judgment of those who sincerely believe hypnotism can aid men in distress, and even some basis for concluding that under unusual circumstances the treatment may be successful. But it is also apparent that H.P.B., were she today writing a survey of hypnotism for either the *Theosophist* or *Lucifer,* would be particularly appreciative of research such as that of Cannel and Paris—and might also find occasion to quote Freud.

## "THE POWER TO STOP"

The article with this title in THEOSOPHY for January gains an interesting footnote from one of Dr. Harry Stack Sullivan's lectures to psychiatrists. It seems that the failure to "stop," in either instructive conversation or in mental therapy, inhibits the awakening of independent will. Dr. Sullivan observes:

> Much good work in psychiatric interviews is horribly garbled or completely destroyed in the last few minutes. So great a problem is this in dealing with certain forms of mental patients that I have for years contemplated having two suites of offices. At the end of the interview, having said my say, I should arise suddenly, step through a door behind my chair, and go to work at my next interview, leaving to the nurse or the secretary the business of escorting my ex-interviewee out, just to avoid the fearful turmoil that some people produce in their attempt to get more of something.

## PATIENTS MUST CONQUER DEPENDENCE

> Just what this "more of something" is, never becomes really clear to me. I am trying now to emphasize to you that when you are through, you are through. Some people, however, won't let you be through if they can help it. After you have formulated with the greatest care some really profoundly important truths, and have risen and looked at the door, hoping that the patient will move toward it, a certain type of obsessional person may say, "Tell me, doctor, have we got anywhere today?," or something like that. All of these frantic reachings for God, you know, or for the Great Formula, and what not, have the general effect of confusing all issues that have previously been clarified with so much effort. And so one literally —and I am not attempting to amuse you a bit—one literally is very

wise in schooling oneself to some rapid exclusion of the person when the interview has come to its end. This takes skill sometimes, but it is very important. In other words, don't go over things, don't explain that which is now clearer than it ever will be if you repeat it. When you are through, you are through.

The correlative sentence in "The Power to Stop" is this:

The paramount difficulty experienced by many individuals is their seeming inability to overcome the tendency to inertia, and arouse the will to initiate necessary courses of action.

## Why Don't They Shoot?

A thoroughly startling article in *Collier's* for November 8 reveals that "half of the combat soldiers in Korea can't seem to force themselves to fire at the enemy." The writer of the article, Bill Davidson, dramatizes the revelation by the following introductory paragraphs:

Imagine you're a combat infantryman in Korea, well trained and well dug in on a ridge line, awaiting an enemy attack. The artillery and mortar barrage begins. You see a number of the enemy making their way up the steep hill toward your unit. They mean to kill you. Ducking from rock to rock, moving steadily forward, they finally run across an open area and come into view. They're perfect targets. You sight down your rifle barrel. Your finger tightens. But then—as the perspiration pours from you—nothing happens! *You just can't squeeze the trigger!*

Impossible, Unusual—Once the Army thought so, too. But now, after a long, hard look at itself, the Army is facing up to these sobering facts:

In any given action of World War II, only 12 to 25 percent of all the combat soldiers who were armed and in a position to fire their weapons at the enemy were able to pull the trigger!

In Korea, the average has been raised by dint of intensive effort, but only to a maximum of about 50 per cent!

In other words, today, one out of every two American soldiers who come face to face with the enemy cannot be counted on to fight.

## Not a Question of Courage

The psychological problem posed by these statistics is clearly a matter of considerable military concern. The hitherto unpublicized efforts to combat this "failue in the line of duty" have been rewarded with little success. One thing which the army officials are now prepared to admit, however, is that failure to fire is not a case of stage fright,

but comes from somewhere in the depths of human nature. Davidson mentions the case of a "much decorated World War I company Commander who always advanced under fire well ahead of his men" yet who lately confessed to a fellow officer that he was never able to pull the trigger of his own weapon. This may not sound like a General in the Marine Corps—as the Commander has become—but he still can't, apparently, force himself to kill anyone.

### MOB PSYCHOLOGY PARTIAL SOLUTION?

Brigadier General S. L. A. Marshall, who is credited with knowing more about why G.I.'s shoot than anyone else, says that the best antidote is to get the soldiers to shouting together. It seems it is of greater military importance to allow the men to "talk it up" and develop a group combat consciousness, than to prevent betrayal of positions at the time of origination of an assault.

Most speculations on the "failure to shoot" phenomena involve reference to the traditional conditioning against fratricide which "democratic" youths are supposed to receive in Church and School. However, even Brigadier General Marshall does not seem to think this is the whole problem, for he *does not believe that the Russians are able to get one-hundred per cent fire from their soldiers either,* despite the fact Soviet propaganda holds individual life to be much less important than does democratic belief.

### CONFUSION

From a Theosophical point of view, is it not permissible to speculate that propaganda and conditioning may never reach deeper than the *lower manasic* level of the human being? A man might be able to believe "rationally" in the necessity for war and the necessity for his participation in it, and this determination might enable him to transcend personal fear. But, even so, the higher elements of his nature might protest an action he had not inwardly seen to be necessary. Part of the tragedy of modern war, a far greater tragedy than the physical casualties, is the apparent necessity for acting without sufficient time for self-determination of goals and methods of attaining them. A confused man can learn little, while the man who is inwardly sure of a decision, whether it be to fight or to refuse to fight, will be able to make internal progress.